

### **Vacancy Announcement: Consultant**

**Consultancy Title:** Early Childhood Development, Adolescent Health, DI Consultant (National, Belarus)

**Section/Division/Duty Station:** ECD and Child Protection Sections, UNICEF Belarus CO

**Duration:** March 2026 – March 2027 (about 12 months)

**Home/ office Based:** Remote/Home-based (with visits to the office upon request/needs), expect to spend substantial time in the office interacting with our teams

#### **About UNICEF**

If you are a committed, creative professional and are passionate about making a lasting difference for children, the world's leading children's rights organization would like to hear from you. Over 75 years, UNICEF has been working on the ground in 190 countries and territories to promote children's survival, protection and development. UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and abuse. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations, and governments.

#### **BACKGROUND**

In 2026, UNICEF country programme interventions will be focusing on strengthening systems to ensure children and adolescents are developing their full potential; parents, caregivers and specialists increase their capacity in providing support and counselling; young children with developmental delays and disabilities covered by specialised health and social protection services and adolescents have access to the youth friendly health services to ensure their better health and development outcomes.

The Consultancy will address the child development paradigm starting from early years and moving gradually to adolescents and young people applying life cycle and cross-sectoral approach in nature.

Early Childhood Development refers first 1000 days of person's life and goes up to 5 years involving cognitive, physical, language, motor, social and emotional development. These transitional processes are noted to be supported by social and financial policies' frameworks and the synergies of health, nutrition, education, child protection services. Early childhood provides an opportunity to shape the trajectory of a child's holistic development and provides a pillar for their future. To achieve their full potential, as well as to realize their right to family environment, children need age and ability specific health care and nutrition, safeguarding and opportunities for early learning, and responsive caregiving which includes positive parenting practices. All of these are contributors to nurturing care.

Adolescence is another important stage of a child's development, the transitional phase between childhood and adulthood, encompassing both physical and psychological changes. The adolescence is a second window of opportunity for the brain development after the early ages. During adolescents the brain undergoes significant, experience-dependent reorganization, particularly in the prefrontal cortex and limbic system, through processes like synaptic pruning and myelination. This period allows for the refinement of cognitive, emotional, and social abilities, enabling adolescents to adapt to increasingly complex environments and solidify the neural circuits that underpin adult decision-making, self-regulation, and identity.

**Purpose of Activity/Assignment:**

The Purpose of the consultancy is to provide technical support in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programme intervention in ECD/ECI, Adolescent Health and DI related areas in March 01, 2026 – February 28, 2027.

Building on 2020-2025 results and in partnership with Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour and Social protection UNICEF plans to scale up programmatic and advocacy for ECI, inclusive nutrition, youth friendly health services and DI at the national and regional levels. The envisaged interventions will be delivered through the following strategies: system strengthening, capacity building of professionals, establishing synergies between sectors to ensure effective referral mechanisms and support to parents. The scope of work is nationwide, with some focus on specific regions, such as Brest, Homel and Vitebsk oblasts for DI.

Within ECD the focus will be made on the ECI system strengthening, expert support in the establishment of the National ECI Coordination Center, study, review and development of the recommendation of the improvement of the home visiting system for the early childhood development. The piloting of the ECI costing in one of the regions with the follow-up review, amendment and finalization will be one of 2026-year priorities. The inclusive nutrition component will be reinforced within the work of 47 ECI centres through the strengthening capacity building of specialists.

The adolescent health issues will be addressed through the expert support to the analytical review of the prevention of the overweight and obesity in children and adolescents with conclusions and recommendations and the development of the National Strategy and Road Map cross-sectoral in nature. In close collaboration with the specialists of the BelCMT and RPRC “Mother and Child” the Consultant will work of the institutionalization of the Youth Friendly Health Services and Centres within the Code on Health and PHC system strengthening on sexual and reproductive health of adolescents and young people focusing on adolescents with chronic diseases and disabilities.

In 2025, UNICEF completed the Family for Every Child project in Vitebsk Oblast, resulting in the development of a deinstitutionalization (DI) Road Map for children living in residential care. The Road Map was formally presented to and endorsed by oblast authorities. In line with agreements with the Vitebsk Oblast Administration, UNICEF will continue providing supervision and technical assistance to support the phased scale-up and implementation of the Road Map. As part of the DI programme, UNICEF will also strengthen medical and social services delivered through oblast baby homes. Overall, DI interventions will cover Brest, Homiel, and Vitebsk oblasts.

**Nature of Work/General Operating Areas:**

- Analytical nature of work requiring basic conceptual comprehension and capacity to apply conceptual models and policies
- Support to the CO long-term interventions as following:

(1) **strengthening** primary health care (PHC) ensuring equity, quality access and better coverage for young children, prevention of the overweight and obesity and adolescents SRH;

- (2) and **improving quality of specialised services**, such as Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), inclusive nutrition and feeding; and
- (3) **enhancing professional capacity of future and practicing workforce** of the PHC and social protection platforms for deinstitutionalisation (DI).

**Scope of Work:**

Under direct supervision of the Programme Specialist (Social Sector) and in cooperation with all relevant UNICEF sections (Child Protection, SBC, Communications and Partnerships) the Consultant will provide high quality support in designing and implementing UNICEF program interventions as following:

1. Provide expert support to programme planning and ongoing program interventions on ECI, inclusive nutrition and feeding, prevention of risky and unhealthy behavior in children and health of adolescents, within overall agenda of Optimal Health and Development Outcome.
2. Provide expert support to programme planning and to ongoing program interventions on DI within the overall agenda of Supportive Family Environment and Protection from Violence Outcome.
3. Provide expert support to ongoing events, informational and behavior change activities and campaigns, preparation of HISs and other relevant documents within overall agenda of SBC and Communication section that is related to the rights of children with disabilities and developmental delays, children at social risk or placed in residential care institutions, adolescents practicing risky behavior. Develop materials for parents and caregivers on all domains of Nurturing care, with specific focus on children 0-6 with disabilities and developmental delays.
4. Provide inputs, relevant to programmatic expertise, to project proposals and donor reports within the overall agenda of the Partnership section and in close cooperation with the Partnership Officer.

**Terms of Reference / Key Deliverables / Delivery Deadline:**

Work Assignment Overview	Deliverables/outputs	Delivery deadline
<b>Objective 1: Provide expert support to programme planning and implementation ongoing program interventions on ECD/ECI and adolescent health</b>	1.1. Technical assistance in implementing the project on improving the efficiency of financing and management of the early intervention system and adolescent-friendly health care in the Republic of Belarus, in partnership with BelCMT, including review of reports and provision of recommendations	30.04.2026 report, PPP at the RT, expert group discussion with the documentation x 5
	1.2. Technical assistance in implementing the project with the Republican Scientific and Practical Center “Mother and Child” on analyzing home visits within the primary health care system for children in the Republic of Belarus, including review of reports and developed recommendations	30.06.2026 report, PPP at the RT, expert group discussion with the documentation x 6

	1.3. Technical assistance in implementing the project with the Republican Scientific and Practical Center of Hygiene on the prevention of overweight and obesity in children with the reports review and providing inputs/recommendations to the development of the National Strategy and Road Map, draft Resolution of the RT and participation in the RT with the presentation and results documentation	30.06.2026 report, inputs, recommendations, PPP at the RT, expert group discussion with the documentation x 6
	1.4. Expert support in drafting programmatic documents and monitoring reports in the areas of early childhood development, ECI, and adolescents' health	30.11.2026 document not less than 3 pages x 4
	1.5. Expert support, inputs, draft proposals and contribute to the amendments of the existing or newly developed Policy Papers (State Programmes, Plans, Strategies, Concepts)	28.02.2027 document x 4
	1.6. Expert support to the development of the UNICEF RWPs with the line Ministries and regions: ECI/ECD inputs developed, submitted to the supervisor, reviewed and finalized based on the comments or feedback from partners/supervisor and document progress versus planned results	30.09.2026 inputs/document x 4
<b>Objective 2: Provide expert support to programme planning and to ongoing program interventions on DI within overall agenda of Supportive Family Environment and Protection from Violence Outcome</b>	2.1. Technical support in advocacy and promotion of DI agenda: -contribution to the development of the DI advocacy strategy based on the outcomes of UNICEF pilots in communities - development of a logistics package (concept, agenda, set of handouts) and facilitation of an international DI conference	30.09.2026  30.05.2026
	2.2. Technical support in scaling up the DI Road Map in Vitebsk oblast: -quarterly monitoring of progress via field visits (4) with written recommendations provided -consultations to the implementing Task Force during 6 online meetings (1.5 hours each) -review a foster parenting module/programme developed by Vitebsk oblast Institute on development of education with recommendations provided -recommendations for piloting a home-based respite care service in Vitebsk oblast.	20.12.2026 activity x 4
	2.3. Development and promotion of medical and social assistance in baby homes:	28.02.2027 activity x 4

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-review a study on the organization of medical and social support in baby homes and assess the needs for such support among families with children with disabilities with recommendations provided</li> <li>-review a model of medical and social support based in baby homes for children with disabilities under 18 years of age with recommendations provided</li> <li>-provide recommendations for renovation and technical equipment of the medical and social support unit at the Vitebsk baby home</li> <li>-review a training module for specialists providing medical and social support with recommendations provided.</li> </ul>	
	<p>2.4.Expert support in implementation of the DI project in Pinsk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Analyze outcomes of the project along with documented practices and provide recommendations on further steps to scale its results.</li> <li>-Technical support of the project team via online consultations (4) with recommendations provided.</li> <li>-Review draft normative act, restricting the placement of children in residential facilities.</li> </ul>	<p>30.05.2026 activity x 3</p>
	<p>2.5.Expert support in implementation of the DI project in Homiel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Review the algorithm of monitoring and support of families and children by specialists of education, social care, and health systems in returning children from the Baby home to biological family or foster family arrangements.</li> <li>-Review Recommendations on establishment of interagency cooperation algorithms with stages for needs assessment of children and families along with mechanisms for preventing the placement of young children into Infant Homes.</li> <li>-Expert support in project implementation, providing online consultations (4) to the project team.</li> <li>-Analyze outcomes of the project along with documented practices and provide recommendations on further steps to scale its results.</li> </ul>	<p>30.09.2026 activity x 4</p>
<p><b>Objective 3: Provide expert support to ongoing events, informational</b></p>	<p>3.1.Expert support in the Coordination of the Belarus specialists' participation at the National and International ECI/ECD/Adolescent health capacity development activities (conferences, seminars,</p>	<p>30.06.2026 activity x 4</p>

<b>and behavior change activities and campaigns, preparation of HISs and other relevant documents within overall agenda of SBC, Communication and Partnership sections that is related to the rights of children with disabilities and developmental delays.</b>	webinars, trainings, qualification upgrade courses, study visits, etc.)	
	3.2. Develop 20 short articles (not less than 0,5 page) for BEBBO application for parents on inclusive nutrition and feeding, early intervention and identification, IYCF, breastfeeding and other related articles to ECD and young children with disabilities	28.02.2027 article x 20
	3.3. Provide expert support during the development of 2 UNICEF HIS on ECI	30.07.2026 HIS x 2
	3.4 Expert support of national wide and local information campaigns/activities on DI: -review a Concept of information campaign on foster parenting and adoption. -expert support in structuring and review the outcomes of assessment and analysis of families' and children's attitudes toward medical and social care, and mapping of communication channels. -expert support for the information and awareness raising campaign for parents caring for children with disabilities and young children, focusing on alternative forms of care and available services, including medical and social assistance	30.03.2027 event x 3
	3.5 Take lead in developing a table of contents and provide expert support in formulation of messages and drafting short articles for UNICEF parenting page	30.10.2026 article x 6
	3.6 Provide programmatic expertise and inputs to project proposals and donor reports in ECD/ECI/Adolescent Health/DI/Better Parenting under the overall Partnership agenda	28.02.2027 document not less than 2 pages x 6

**Travel (if required as per TOR):**

Consultant will provide estimated budgets for travels to project sites during the contract period (places, number of visits \*rate per one visit\* number of days of each visit)

**Qualifications**

**Education:**

- University degree (Masters) or equivalent qualification in health, pediatrics, rehabilitation or in a related field is required.

**Work experience/Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:**

- A minimum of 10 years of professional experience in areas related to the rights of children with disabilities and their families, health and development of children, in particular experience in working with most vulnerable.
- Demonstrated experience in project implementation, drafting strategies, and other analytical documents.
- Excellent analytical skills and ability to communicate complex issues clearly and succinctly both verbally and in writing.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and demonstrated experience working in a multicultural environment.
- Passion and demonstrated commitment to UNICEF's mission and core values.
- Background/familiarity with UNICEF's ECD programme will be an asset.
- Fluency in Russian and English.

**Competencies:**

- Drive to achieve results for impact.
- Demonstrates self-awareness and ethical awareness.
- Thinks and acts strategically.
- Works collaboratively with others.

**Requirements:**

Completed profile in UNICEF's e-Recruitment system and

- Interested applicants should provide a letter of interest (Cover Letter) describing how they can contribute to the interventions listed under roles and responsibilities and why they should be selected for this position. In addition, they should share their latest CV/Resume and financial proposal to undertake this job.
- Samples of the related job/tasks done.
- Upload copy of academic credentials
- Financial proposal should be submitted using the financial offer template and must:
  - Reflect the costs per each deliverable and the total lump-sum for the whole assignment period (in US\$) to undertake the terms of reference.
  - Include travel costs and daily subsistence allowance, if internationally recruited or travel is required as per TOR. Consultants are responsible for arranging their own transportation arrangements. UNICEF can provide office vehicle for some duty travel missions with prior agreement as per monthly travel plan approved by the supervisor
  - Include any other costs: visa, health insurance, payment of an incidental expenditure (such as bank charges, insurances, etc.) and living costs as applicable.
- Indicate your availability
- Any emergent / unforeseen duty travel and related expenses will be covered by UNICEF.
- At the time the contract is awarded, the selected candidate must have in place current health insurance coverage.
- Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed satisfactory deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant.

**Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and advance to the next stage of the selection process.**